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9 March 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Thomas L. Hughes
Director of Intelligence and Research
Department of State

SUBJECT : Release of Material Showing North Vietnamese Control over the Viet Cong

1. We have received a copy of your 27 February memorandum to General Carroll entitled, "Material on North Vietnamese Control over the Viet Cong," and the draft cable attached thereto.
2. The documents discussed in your memorandum (some of which were furnished by this Agency) show very clearly that the Communist (Peoples' Revolutionary) Party dominates the Viet Cong movement, including the National Liberation Front. They do not seem to us to make it equally clear that Hanoi controls, as well as supports, the Viet Cong. Several of these documents hint at or strongly imply the existence of this control, but none states it directly and explicitly.
3. As Mr. Adams of my staff has already indicated to Mr. Hayser, your cable seems fine to us. We would like to suggest, however, that the case for Hanoi's control over the Viet Cong could be more strongly and convincingly made if the relevant documents were released at a press conference in which the defector, [redacted] also participated. Being knowledgeable of Party matters both north and south of the 17th Parallel, [redacted] could, in effect, lead reporters by the hand, explaining what it is the documents hint at or what they imply. The net impact of the two complementary sources -- document and defector -- should be considerable. The U.S. Mission in Saigon is in the best position to write the cable. The U.S. Mission in Saigon is in the best position to write the cable.

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detailed script for such a press conference, but it seems to us that official U.S. presence at the actual conference should be played down as much as possible. [] would be telling the truth, the documents would enhance the credibility of his words (and vice versa), and the net impact of the story would be heightened if it came from Vietnamese writings and Vietnamese lips.

4. It also seems to us that the windfall acquisition of the still and motion pictures of North Vietnamese Generals Nguyen Chi Thanh, Tran Do and Tran Van Tra (reported in Saigon Embassy telegram 1983) could be profitably incorporated into the above scenario. It was [] after all, who first identified the pictures of these three senior DRV officers. We have not seen the pictures and, hence, cannot estimate their quality, but if [] is right, large scale blowups of some of the captured stills and selected frames from the captured movie, when presented side by side with known photographs of these three, should convincingly confirm his identification. If release of the pictures were compensated with release of the documents, the total impact of the press conference should be quite marked.

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5. We offer the thoughts above as suggestions for your consideration. We recognize that [] might be uncooperative or an unimpressive public performer, or both. These are matters the U.S. Mission would have to judge. Since we understand that [] is now in the National Interrogation Center, he should be readily available if the U.S. Government wants to use him.

George A. Carver, Jr.
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

cc: General Carroll

O/DCI/SAVA:GACarver,Jr/mee

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- 2 -

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